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How to Improve the Memory

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By

EDWIN GORDON LAWRENCE ✓

Author of

The Lawrence Reader and Speaker
How to Master the Spoken Word
etc., etc.



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PREFACE

IN offering this system of memory training to the public the author frankly states that it is not a secret that is imparted for so many dollars, nor one that can be obtained without labor. It is intended to show how the mind can be strengthened so as to enable it to perceive, retain, and reproduce incidents that have passed; how words, dates, facts, and pictures may be stored away in the brain and recalled at pleasure; how by a right use of the mental power memory can be made to perform wonderful feats.

There is no reason why it should take a public speaker ten times longer to memorize his speech than it does to write it, nor is there any reason

Preface

why matter once committed to memory should speedily be forgotten.

The author has devoted a lifetime to the training of orators and actors, and this system of memory training, now given for the first time to the public, has been the growth of years, and been thoroughly tested by him on vast numbers of students. He therefore offers it to all who desire to possess a good memory with the assurance that their wish can be gratified by a faithful study of these pages.

EDWIN G. LAWRENCE.

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How to Improve the Memory

LESSON I

MEMORY

WHAT *is memory?*

Memory is the mental power of recognizing past knowledge. It is a recalling of facts, words, faces, or pictures that had been put aside. A business act has been performed and the facts are then stowed away in the recesses of the mind, but some time later a dispute arises concerning these facts and it is necessary that all the details of the transaction should be recalled; an acquaintanceship springs up between two travelers, they part,

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and do not meet again for many years, but finally they come face to face; a gorgeous sunset is witnessed by one as he is journeying near the tropics, the sun sinks to rest and the picture is gone. Recalling the facts pertaining to the business act, remembering the face of the acquaintance, reproducing the picturesque sunset, are acts of the memory.

How does memory act?

It acts through several processes of the mind known as perception, retention, reproduction, representation, and recognition.

What is meant by perception?

By perception is meant the power of gaining immediate knowledge by means of one or more of the senses. We may perceive by the eye, ear, nose, tongue, or skin. These all act as means for conducting emotions to the brain, the brain communicates

with the organs of expression, and they show how what is perceived acts upon the perceiver.

What is meant by retention?

In its application to memory, retention means the power by which knowledge is kept in the mind, subconsciously, to be reproduced at will.

What is meant by reproduction?

Reproduction means the process of the mind whereby any object, be it a fact, word, face, or picture, once known but not perceived for some period of time, is brought back into conscious use.

What is representation?

It is the process by which the mind presents to itself objects which it has previously known.

What is recognition?

By recognition is meant a second knowing; a re-knowing of what has been known before.

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We thus see that in order to have a good memory it is necessary for the mind to be healthy and vigorous so that it may see, retain, reproduce, represent, and recognize.

PERCEPTION

The power of perception may be strengthened by paying attention to things, noticing their peculiarities or distinguishing traits. Some speakers, for instance, arrange their speeches on cards 3x5 inches, placing one paragraph or one section of the speech on one card, and in memorizing the written matter they keep before them an image of the card containing the particular matter that is on that card, familiarizing themselves with the appearance of the matter on the card, and when they rise to speak, these cards pass before their mental vision and it is easy for them to recall the

REPRODUCTION

To be able to retain will be of little use unless we can at the same time reproduce, but if one has stamped the object on the brain it will be a simple matter to reproduce it as many times as the person may desire, and this reproduction can be continued until the brain wears out. In this connection the brain is much like a phonograph record: an impression is made on it, and it may then be reproduced indefinitely, the quality of the reproduction and the ability to reproduce depending on the perfection of the impression and the ability of the mind to recognize it when reproduced.

RECOGNITION

The power to recognize is as essential as the ability to reproduce, for unless the mind recognizes the repro-

duction, memory will fail to act. The following incident will explain this fact: Henry W. Longfellow and Ralph Waldo Emerson were intimate friends, both living to a ripe age and achieving renown. Longfellow retained possession of all his faculties until he died, but Emerson's mind had lost its marvelous power some years previous to his physical dissolution. On the death of Longfellow, Emerson's daughter conducted her father to where the funeral services over the body of his departed friend were being held, and as he gazed upon the peaceful face, encircled with its snow white hair, he said: "It is a sweet, sweet face; he was a lovely character;" then, turning to his daughter, he continued in a tone indicating that he was trying hard to recall whose face it was, "but I have forgotten his name." This showed

that all the processes of memory had not worked—that of recognition was lacking—and while Emerson's mind perceived, retained, reproduced, and represented, it failed to recognize, and consequently he was unable to remember.

By this time the student will perceive that this system is not a hocus-pocus trick, a juggling of figures or words, but an honest setting forth of the means by which the mind can be made to see, retain, and reproduce objects, facts, and words by the simple process of exercising thought. In order that one should have a good memory, it is necessary for the brain to do its duty, and it will be impossible for it to perform this duty unless it is in a healthful state. Brain power is essential to the health of the brain, and this power can only be attained through keeping the brain in action.

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In other words, it must be used in order that it may become strong, active, and healthy. It must be educated, not necessarily educated in the sense we call schooling, but educated by the mental activity that observes things, studies the form, purpose, and effect of them, and reasons the consequences that may arise from any action. Men are foolish who think they can deaden the brain with liquor, stupefy it with drugs, and poison the system with nicotine and yet have a good memory. If any there be who have accompanied us thus far on our journey who think they can persist in dissipation and at the same time acquire a good memory, they had better stop right where they are and not hug that flattering unction to their souls. Note the words that Shakespeare puts in the mouth of Lady Macbeth:

Memory

When Duncan is asleep

(Whereto the rather shall his day's hard
journey

Soundly invite him), his two chamberlains
Will I with wine and wassel so convince,
That memory, the warder* of the brain,
Shall be a fume,† and the receipt of reason
A limbeck‡ only.

— Macbeth, Act 1, Scene VII.

By this it is not meant that men must neither drink nor smoke if they desire to possess good memories, because both these things may be indulged in with moderation without doing any serious harm to the mind, but it is the author's opinion that overindulgence of any kind (drinking, eating, or smoking) tends to weaken the mind and thus injure the memory.

The means employed for strength-

* One who wards or keeps guard.

† Any state of mind that confuses or stupefies.

‡ A still; a vessel through which distilled liquors pass.

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ening, developing, and controlling the memory are:

1. Attention. (1) Note the location of figures, letters, words, phrases, or objects. (2) Lay hold of the thought.
2. Apposition. Similarity of figures, words, thoughts, or objects.
3. Opposition. Difference between figures, words, thoughts, or objects.
4. Combination. Arrangement of figures, words, thoughts, or objects.
5. Sequence. An orderly following in space, time, or arrangement of figures, words, objects, or thoughts.

The student should study carefully the definitions and explanations given in this lesson as they will prepare him

Memory

for grasping readily the instructions on Attention, which will be the subject of the next lesson.

LESSON II

ATTENTION

ATTENTION, as here used, is a strong, voluntary, focused application of the mental powers to some special word, figure, object, or thought. The longer a mind is capable of being concentrated on an object, the stronger will be that mind. The monkey is incapable of intelligent action for the reason that it cannot direct its attention to any particular thing for any length of time; it no sooner starts to do one thing, than it stops, turns to something else and fails to remember what it originally intended to do. Many human beings, for lack of attention, are not much better than monkeys. How ir-

resolute, changeful, and forgetful are many persons. Some will start to tell of an occurrence, stop to mention some other matter, forget what they started to say, and then remark, "What was it I wanted to tell you?" The difference between the mind of a Plato and that of an ordinary being is simply this: a Plato possesses the power of continuous mental attention, he is capable of focusing his thought; while the ordinary person cannot control his mentality so as to concentrate its powers for any length of time on any specific object. Now then, the first step toward training the memory is to learn to pay attention.

Consider the lines from *As You Like It*, quoted in the first lesson:

And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running
 brooks,

Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.

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A moment's attention given to this passage will stamp it upon the mind so that it will never be forgotten. An inattentive person would notice nothing peculiar about this quotation; he would most likely see that it spoke of trees, brooks, and stones, but he would fail to notice the bearing that the words tongues, books, and sermons had on them. The attentive person would instantly grasp the fact that the initial letter of tongues is the same as that of trees, that of books the same as brooks, and that of sermons the same as stones, and he thereby immediately has transferred the thought of the poet to his own mind by means of attention, and the details are so thoroughly seen and understood as to make a deep impression on his mind and render him capable of reproducing the lines at any time.

John Adams and Thomas Jeffer-

son died on the same day. How many Americans know the date of the death of these two famous men? By a simple process of reasoning, taking up but a moment's time, the fact can be placed on the tablet of the mind so that it can never be erased. They died on July 4, 1826, the semi-centennial of American independence. It is a simple matter to remember that they died on the anniversary of the birth of their country, thus fixing the day and month, and by calling the attention of the mind to the fact that the year of their death was the semi-centennial of their country's birth, the year 1826 will become closely associated with the death of Adams and Jefferson. This, of course, requires some thought at the moment you desire to place the fact in the charge of memory, but after you have given it the necessary attention in order to

impress it upon the mind, you need give it no further attention, nor be concerned when you have occasion to use it. The fact will be so well known that you will have no trouble in knowing it again whenever you desire to produce it from its repository. Another interesting fact of a similar nature is that James Monroe, fifth president of the United States, also died on the anniversary of his country's birth. His death occurred five years after the death of his predecessors, and he was the fifth president of the United States. These facts will make it easy to remember that he departed this life in 1831. While these facts are so distinctive as to render them easy to memorize, all facts worth remembering possess some attribute that will enable an attentive person to lay hold of the distinguishing trait and recall the fact at

will, provided it has been sufficiently studied to make it known.

At this period of our work let us understand that the first requisite to a good memory is attention. Without this quality it is impossible for the mind to retain and reproduce what it has seen by the eye, ear, or any other sense. If one desires to remember matter that he reads, he should read intently, studying all the incidents and arranging them consecutively, looking more to the thought that is conveyed by the words than to the words themselves. For instance, Horace Mann, in his address on education, expresses himself thus:

From her earliest history, the policy of this country has been to develop the minds of all her people, and to imbue them with the principles of duty. To do this work most effectually, she has begun with the young. If she would continue to mount higher and higher toward the summit of prosperity, she must

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continue the means by which her present elevation has been gained. In doing this, she will not only exercise the noblest prerogative of government, but will coöperate with the Almighty in one of His sublimest works.

Now, how is one, after reading this passage, to be able to gather the thoughts so as to retain them sufficiently to enable him to repeat the substance of the paragraph? Simply by giving attention to it while reading it. Note that from a certain period it has been the policy of a special country to do two particular things, in a specific manner. That if that country is to continue her illustrious career, she must continue to make use of the means which have produced her present prosperity. In doing so, she will perform two important duties. After gathering these facts from an attentive perusal of the matter, they should be carefully arranged in a

sequence so that their orderly arrangement will assist the mind in reproducing them. (1) From her earliest history, (2) the policy of this country (3) has been to develop the minds of all her people, (4) and to imbue them with the principles of duty. (5) To do this work effectually, she has begun with the young. (6) If she would continue to mount higher and higher toward the summit of prosperity, she must continue the means by which her present elevation has been gained. (7) In doing this, she will not only exercise the noblest prerogative of government, (8) but will coöperate with the Almighty in one of His sublimest works. Again, (1) earliest history, (2) policy of country, (3) develop her people, (4) principles of duty, (5) begun with the young, (6) continue the means, (7) exercise prerogative of

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government, (8) coöperate with the Almighty. After the passage has been examined in this particular manner it will be thoroughly known and cannot be forgotten.

A face can be remembered by making use of the same means as given for remembering language. When you desire to retain a knowledge of a face, examine it minutely, look for distinguishing marks, such as small or large ears, protruding or retreating chin, color of eyes and hair, style of nose, open or closed mouth, or any peculiarity or mannerism of any of the features. After having noted the characteristics of General John A. Logan's face, it would be impossible for a healthy mind to forget it. The long, straight hair, high cheek bones, Grecian nose, and piercing eye, were of so distinguishing a nature as to stamp the General's features upon an

attentive mind in such a manner as to make his face known as long as the person retained his faculties. Recall to mind the face of Washington, of Lincoln, and of Grant, and think what special feature is most prominent or characteristic, and it will then be perceived why these faces are easily remembered. Think of the face of a friend, and ask yourself if it is not his curly hair, squinting eye, or pleasant smile that presents itself first to your mind when you recall his face. By these means it will be found that a face, if seen only for a moment, may be remembered for years.

In like manner one may remember his pathway through a strange country so as to find his way back to his starting point. Instead of noting peculiarities of the features of the face, he must note those of the country through which he passes. He

must note particularly any circumstance at a cross road or fork in the trail that will enable him to turn in the correct direction. Sometimes a bush, a stone, a tuft of grass will suffice to direct the traveler on his way in sections where there is not a fence or house to mark the direction he should take. The author recalls an instance when he was journeying on horseback through a sparsely settled section in southern Florida that his being able to locate a cactus plant, not a foot in height, was the only thing that saved him from taking the wrong direction where two trails crossed, and going many miles out of his way. What fastened the remembrance of the cactus on his mind was the fact that he paused to examine it, because it was the first one he had seen in Florida, and he was surprised to see it growing in that section, so he dis-

mounted in order to find out if it resembled the cacti of Arizona. As he gazed at the little plant, he noticed that it was growing close to the east side of the trail (he was then traveling toward the southwest), and that only a short distance south from where the cactus was growing was another trail bearing to the northwest. On his return journey he was uncertain as to whether he should take the trail bearing to the northwest or the one to the northeast, but as soon as he saw the cactus over on the east side of the trail leading to the northeast, he knew that was the road for him to take. This proved a valuable lesson to him regarding the advisability of paying attention.

The rule of Attention far excels in serviceableness any other rules that have ever been put forward by any other system of memory training, be-

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cause they apply only in special cases, while it applies in all cases.

The author wishes it to be understood clearly that he desires the student to pay particular attention to the thought, this being the most important part of memory training, and that placing the attention on the position of figures, letters, words, etc., is only to be done as a means to an end, the end being a recalling of the object or thought. **LAY HOLD OF THE THOUGHT.**

LESSON III

APPOSITION

THE AUTHOR, in his use of the word apposition in these lessons, means the addition of one word or phrase or object to illustrate another. Apposition is the placing side by side of two or more things. With the aid of apposition the mind is assisted in perceiving, and as perception is one of the principal attributes of memory, apposition must be a power in strengthening that faculty. By means of apposition we are enabled to see the similarity of things; as,

Abraham Lincoln, president of the United States, issued a proclamation on January 1, 1863, freeing three million slaves.

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Abraham Lincoln and president of the United States are one and the same, and by means of apposition we learn that Abraham Lincoln was president of the United States. President of the United States is added to Abraham Lincoln to show that at the time the *Proclamation of Emancipation* was issued Abraham Lincoln was the chief executive of the United States.

How does apposition assist the memory?

It assists the memory in that it causes the mind to put forth effort in comparing one object to another, in this way intensifying the application and causing an impression to be made on the mind; as,

My friend lives at Ridgway, which is located in a beautiful section of country about one hundred miles from the city of Buffalo. In order to remember the name of

the place where the friend resides, it is only necessary to examine the word and associate it with two things: ridge and way. Think of a ridge and then of a way through the ridge, and the name Ridgway is stamped upon the mind. This mode of remembering is by means of apposition or similarity.

Similes are aids to the memory. A simile is a form of comparison. It directs the mind to one object by comparing it to another; as,

The day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of Night,
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in his flight.*

— Longfellow.

Here the poet compares the darkness falling over the earth to an eagle winging his flight, and represents how softly the darkness falls by comparing it to the almost imperceptible

* The Day is Done.

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dropping of a feather from the eagle to the earth. The picture that the poet wishes to convey is the gradual coming on of night, and he fastens this point upon our minds by calling our attention to the fact that the darkness falls as slowly, gently, and noiselessly as does the soft, light feather from the bird in the air. By noting closely the similarity of the falling of darkness and the wafting downward of the feather, it will be impossible to forget that the darkness came slowly. Had the darkness suddenly fallen upon the earth, the poet would have compared it to the blowing out of a light, or the action of some quickly moving object.

Homer, in the *Iliad*, in order to show the vast number of the Greeks, uses this simile:

As the bees came forth continually in fresh numbers, so fresh bands of Greeks keep con-

tinually pouring forth from the ships and tents.

This gives a clear and comprehensive idea of the number of Greeks, because of their being compared to bees continually coming forth in fresh numbers. We think of bees swarming from their hives, and this gives us a vivid understanding of the hordes of Greeks pouring from the ships and tents. . Nothing would more clearly explain the number of the Greeks, nor impress upon our minds the fact that they were many, better than does this statement made in the form of a simile.

Here is a portion of a speech which Shakespeare places in the mouth of Othello after Iago has convinced him of the wantonness of his wife. It is a passage from the thrilling drama which is difficult for many persons to memorize:

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Like to the Pontick sea,
Whose icy current and compulsive course
Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on
To the Propontick, and the Hellespont;
Even so my bloody thoughts, with violent
pace,
Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble
love,
Till that a capable and wide revenge
Swallow them up. — Now, by yon marble
heaven,
In the due reverence of a sacred vow
I here engage my words.*

What have we here to aid the memory? Many things, after the passage is understood. We should be aware that the ancient historians stated that the Pontick (or Black) Sea ever flowed out into the Propontick (or Marmora) Sea, but that it never flowed back again to the Pontick. Here, then, is the means of easily memorizing the passage. The idea is of something ever going in the same

* Othello, Act III, Scene III.

direction, and by means of the similarity of action of the Pontick Sea and Othello's thoughts, both ever flowing out but never returning, we get a clear understanding of Othello's fixed determination not to retire from his purpose until his object is accomplished. As the Pontick ever flows into the Propontick, never ebbing back, so will his bloody thoughts of vengeance continue, never turning back to his earlier fond thoughts of love. Here is a clear case of apposition, and by means of the simile the idea is quickly perceived, firmly impressed upon the mind, and easily recalled.

Names of persons, places, and things are easily memorized and recalled by means of noting the similarity between them and others; as,

1. Shakespeare (Shake-speare)
2. Blackstone (Black-stone)

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3. Portchester (Port-Chester)
4. Williamsbridge (William's-bridge)
5. Recollect (re-collect)
6. Disease (dis-ease).

Thus by means of thinking of the shaking of a spear the name of the great dramatist is recorded; of a black stone, that of the expounder of legal principles is deposited in the keeping of memory; of the Port of Chester, the name of the city of Portchester is introduced to the mind; of William's bridge, that of Williamsbridge. By analyzing the word recollect we find that it means re-collecting, a second gathering together, a reuniting of scattered things, and thus the word is ours for all time. In the same manner, disease means dis-ease, the prefix dis signifying apart or asunder, thus showing that disease means apart or away from ease, con-

sequently when we are ill we are away from ease, because to be at ease is to be well. In this way, which is nothing more than a careful examination of objects, the names of persons, places, and things can be easily perceived, retained, and reproduced. In other words, they can be remembered.

By the same means speeches can be memorized; as,

When you come to a good book, you must ask yourself, "Am I inclined to work as an Australian miner would? Are my pickaxes and shovels in good order, and am I in good trim myself — and my sleeves well up to the elbows, and my breath good, and my temper?" And, keeping the figure a little longer, even at the cost of tiresomeness, for it is a thoroughly useful one, the metal you are in search of being the author's mind or meaning, his words are as the rock which you have to crush and smelt in order to get at it. And your pickaxes are your own care, wit, and learning; your smelting-furnace is your own thoughtful soul. Do not hope to get at any

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good author's meaning without those tools and that fire. Often you will need sharpest, finest chiselling, and patientest fusing before you can gather one grain of the metal.

— John Ruskin.

In the first place lay hold of the things used for illustrating the thought: The Australian miner as representing the reader; the pickaxes and shovels symbolical of the working tools; the metal compared to the author's mind, his words to the rock, the smelting-furnace to the thoughtful soul. Now we are prepared to see the picture which the simile produces, to grasp the thought, and to commit it to memory with ease.

By means of analogy (apposition) facts are readily recalled; as,

Andrew Johnson was the only president of the United States whom it was ever sought to impeach, and he escaped impeachment by one vote.

Apposition

The singular words “only,” and “one,” and the initial letter “A” in the word Andrew, are the means by which the facts contained in the above sentence can easily be remembered.

A, in Andrew, is the first letter of the alphabet, *only* (one or first) qualifying president of the United States, *one* qualifying vote, are the simple means whereby we may remember that Andrew Johnson was the only president of the United States whom it was ever sought to impeach, and that he escaped impeachment by the narrow margin of one vote. The analogous facts that Andrew Johnson was the *only* president whom it was sought to impeach, and his escaping impeachment by *one* vote, will enable a person to recall them without trouble, because of their similarity. This being another instance where memory is strengthened by means of

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apposition. At the same time, we must not lose sight of the fact that we should *lay hold of the thought*.

We have now reached the end of the third lesson of the series, and the author urges a thorough study of this lesson, so that the next in order, Opposition, may be the better understood.

LESSON IV

OPPOSITION

BY opposition is meant the state of being opposite or opposed; a position, object, word, or thought confronting or opposing another; contrast; as,

Magnificent, indeed, was the material creation, when, suddenly blazing forth in mid-space, the new-born sun dispelled the darkness of the ancient night. But infinitely more magnificent is it when the human soul rays forth its subtler and swifter beams, when the light of the senses irradiates all outward things, revealing the beauty of their colors and the exquisite symmetry of their proportions and forms; when the light of reason penetrates to their invisible properties and laws, and displays all those hidden relations that make up all the sciences; when the light of conscience illuminates the moral world,

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separating truth from error, and virtue from vice.

— Horace Mann.

Here we have a thought beautifully brought out by means of placing it in opposition with another thought. It is the speaker's intention to magnify the beauty and glory of the light of the soul, and in order to do this effectively, he contrasts it with the magnificence of the material light. It will be the simplest thing imaginable to commit to memory this beautiful passage if we will but only lay hold of the thought, and we are enabled to lay hold of the thought by means of the contrast. Let us take it up in this manner: The material creation was beautiful when the new-born sun burst forth in all his splendor and caused the darkness to flee away. This is the first part of the passage for us attentively to notice. Then

comes the statement that beyond description is the light that rays forth from an awakened and educated soul. Here, then, is the contrast, and this it is that enables us to see, retain, and present the idea as set forth by the great educator. What follows is an amplification of his expressed opinion that the light of the soul outshines the light of the sun, and a presentation of some of his reasons for thinking so. Those reasons consisting of the light of the senses, which enables us to perceive the external beauty of objects; the light of reason, that reveals to us the hidden mysteries and glories of things; the light of conscience, that shows us the magnitude and the splendors of the moral world, permitting us to differentiate between good and evil, right and wrong. A careful scrutiny of this sublime passage will reveal the contrasting of the

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two lights, and as soon as this is perceived the thought is grasped and the matter easily memorized. Opposition, or contrast, is a valuable adjunct to memory.

By means of contrast, the beauties of nature, as well as the beauties of thought, are perceived. This fact was once impressed upon the author's mind by a personal experience. While visiting in the southland, he had many occasions to ride out into the country, and on one of these outings he passed through a section of level, sandy land, almost devoid of vegetation and unmarked for miles by sign of human habitation. To the right, some miles distant, stretched a large growth of tall pines, green with the vigor of life and magnified in size through being reflected upon the heavens beyond. Suddenly darkness spread over and around the towering pines, which ap-

peared still taller because of the increased magnifying power of the light which shone from the sun, which was still shining in all his splendor at the spot where the traveler halted to gaze upon the picture. Rain began to fall beyond the stretch of trees, the rain clouds approached nearer and nearer, until they hung in the sky between the traveler and the towering spires. The sun, then forty-five degrees below the meridian, and slowly sinking to the west, was radiant in all his splendor. Then appeared one of the miracles of nature, a bow upon the face of Heaven. It was of immense proportions, spanning one-third of the sky, but what made it most impressive was that it shone above the dark green of the pines, and against the blackness of the clouds. The effect was so striking and spiritual that it seemed as though the

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Almighty had traced a message upon the firmament, and it so affected the traveler that he removed his cap as though in the immediate presence of the Most High, bowed his head in harmony with his soul, and worshiped the Creator through the magnitude of His work. What was it that made the picture so impressive? Contrast. The placing of the many-colored bow over and against the darkness of the trees and the blackness of the clouds had brought out and magnified its hues until every detail was plainly discerned and the picture in its entirety made fully manifest.

Thieves endeavor to live without work, honest men are willing to labor for a living.

Here is a clear case of opposition, as the two classes, thieves and honest men, are contrasted, and their two modes of gaining a livelihood, without

Opposition

work or by labor, are placed in direct opposition. Apply the rule of contrast to the following:

Good name, in man and woman, dear my lord,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls:

Who steals my purse, steals trash, 'tis something, nothing—

'T was mine, 'tis his, and has been slave
to thousands:

But he that filches from me my good name,
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed.*

— Shakespeare.

This passage may easily be memorized by means of noting the contrasts. In the first place, it is stated that a good name is the most valuable gem that either a man or a woman can possess; here we have the contrast between man and woman. Then, it is said that in stealing a purse, the thief steals trash, but in stealing a good name, he takes what is of inestimable

* Othello, Act III, Scene III.

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value to the robbed, but utterly valueless to the robber. The third contrast is between something and nothing; and the fourth, between mine, and his and others. Let the student examine this passage carefully, mentally laying hold of the contrasts, and it will be found that the lines can be memorized without any difficulty and easily recalled to memory.

The French Revolution was undertaken by men and women who had been held in subjugation for centuries and who knew little of the science of government; therefore it failed. The American Revolution was launched by men whose ancestors had fought for centuries under such leaders as Hampden and Cromwell for the right of self-government, and these men had commenced to practice the science of government from the planting of the Colony of Jamestown in 1607, where the first legislative assembly in America convened,* and for these reasons it succeeded.

— Lawrence.

* June 30, 1619.

Here is a clear case of opposition — contrasting the reason for the failure of the French Revolution and the reason for the success of the American Revolution — and this important fact may be recorded in the mind by noting the absence of experience in the one instance and the presence of it in the other.

The political principles of Thomas Jefferson differ from those expounded by Alexander Hamilton. The former believed in a nation composed of sovereign states; while the latter favored a strong centralized government that should have general supervision over the states composing it.

— Lawrence.

No two men, living at the same period and in the same country, engaged in the same pursuits, and both working for the same object, the good of their country, ever differed to a greater extent in their physical, men-

tal, and spiritual natures than did Jefferson and Hamilton. By keeping in mind the fact that they were opposed to each other in all things, it will require no effort of the mind to recall that the political principles of the one were not entertained by the other.

By means of contrast, the differences between things of like natures may be perceived, such as between men, buildings, and works of nature, their peculiarities noted, and their images implanted on the mind. Oratorically, there is no better way than that of opposition for making the meaning clear and definite, or for driving the thought home; and when it comes to strengthening the memory, it will be found that the application of the law of contrast will prove of great assistance.

It is believed that the examples

Opposition

cited in this lesson have made manifest the force of opposition, and it is urged that they be diligently studied by the student before he passes on to the next lesson. These lessons form a natural sequence, one helping the other, and if the student is to gain the desired help from this course in memory training, he must master the lessons in the order in which they are arranged. This is the fourth lesson of the course, and before taking up the fifth, all the preceding ones should be thoroughly mastered. Attention, remember, is one of the essentials to memory, so apply it in this instance and hearken to the advice of your instructor. *Get to the soul of matter by laying hold of the thought.*

LESSON V

COMBINATION

IN using the word combination it is meant to express the idea of a conjunction of objects, words, or thoughts kindred in their nature or form; a group of things closely connected; as,

Nature is an endless combination and repetition of a very few laws.

— Emerson.

The laws of nature are few, but their combinations are many, and because of the many combinations of the few laws of nature these laws seem manifold.

There is a group of six poets who have shed luster upon American literature. These men are, William

Cullen Bryant, born November 3, 1794; Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, February 27, 1807; John Greenleaf Whittier, December 17, 1807; Edgar Allan Poe, February 19, 1809; Oliver Wendell Holmes, August 29, 1809; James Russell Lowell, February 22, 1819. Here we have a group of six: Bryant, Longfellow, Whittier, Poe, Holmes, and Lowell, arranged in the order of their birth. It will be noted that they all were born within a period of fifteen years; all but one (Bryant) within the nineteenth century; all but two (Bryant and Lowell) within the first decade of that century; all but one (Poe) lived into the second half of the nineteenth century, and he missed doing so by less than three months; all but one (Holmes) were born during the cold season of the year; all but one (Bryant) was born during the last

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half of the month; all but one (Lowell) were born on odd days; all but one (Bryant) were born in odd years. Thus it will be seen that all these facts agree in every combination *except one in every case except once*, thus the one runs through the entire list of combinations and *even enters into the exception*. By grouping the poets in this manner, all the facts pertaining to the days, months, and years of their birth are brought prominently forward, and the knowledge can be easily memorized and readily recalled. This is done by means of combinations of similar things. Be sure to study thoughtfully, lay hold of all the similarities in the birth of the members of this group, and do not aim to memorize the facts in connection with the births merely by committing certain figures and letters to memory.

Five vice-presidents of the United States became presidents through the death of the chief magistrate while in office. The names of these men are: John Tyler, Millard Fillmore, Andrew Johnson, Chester A. Arthur, and Theodore Roosevelt. They succeeded William Henry Harrison, Zachary Taylor, Abraham Lincoln, James A. Garfield, and William McKinley. In the first place, make two groups of the five presidents who died in office, placing William Henry Harrison and Zachary Taylor in one group, and Abraham Lincoln, James A. Garfield, and William McKinley in another. Harrison and Taylor died natural deaths; Lincoln, Garfield, and McKinley died at the hands of assassins. In this way we stamp upon our minds the names of the presidents who died in office. John Tyler is closely connected with Wil-

liam Henry Harrison by the campaign slogan "Tippecanoe and Tyler too," Tippecanoe being the name given to Harrison by his followers because of his victory over the Indians at the battle of Tippecanoe, and Tyler was the candidate on the Harrison ticket for vice-president. Thus we find aids to remember that Tyler succeeded Harrison. Zachary Taylor was the hero of the Mexican war, and Millard Fillmore was elected vice-president on the same ticket, therefore, on the death of Taylor, Fillmore became president. This disposes of the first group of presidents who died in office. The second group, composed of those who were assassinated, commences with Lincoln, the emancipator. Lincoln was the first American president to be assassinated and he was succeeded by Andrew Johnson, the first president whom it was

sought to impeach, therefore by means of similarity Lincoln, the *first* to be assassinated, and Johnson, the *first* whom it was sought to impeach, are linked together in our memory. Garfield and McKinley are the other two members of the second group, and they were killed in like manner as Lincoln, by pistol bullet. Arthur, like Johnson, Fillmore, and Taylor, was refused a nomination for the presidency, while Theodore Roosevelt was nominated and elected, being the only vice-president of the United States to be elected president after succeeding to the presidency on the death of the president. The one way to remember the vice-presidents who became presidents on account of the death of their predecessors while in office is by way of the grouping, and the other incidents are merely mentioned as aids to the principal means.

Be particular to lay hold of the facts, rivet the attention to the thought, using the plan of combination merely as a means to an end.

Many examples of grouping can easily be supplied by the student; such as, the New England states: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. It is an easy matter to locate these states by placing them in a group and thus associating them with one another. In like manner, the middle states, the southern states, etc., may all be easily memorized by this simple process, as may also any facts, words, objects, or thoughts.

Take the statesmen who welded together the widely scattered opposition to the policy of Great Britain toward her American colonies in the last half of the eighteenth century, James Otis, Samuel Adams, Benjamin

Franklin, Patrick Henry, Richard Henry Lee, and Thomas Jefferson, and it will be seen at a glance that the group can easily be divided into two groups, those from the colony of Massachusetts and those from the colony of Virginia, and while there were many other patriots of that period who did much toward bringing about American freedom, these six men were the prime movers in the events that led to the Declaration of Independence.

Let us form another group made up of the men who did most toward upholding the declaration that "these states are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states," and we have Washington, Hamilton, John Adams, Robert Morris, LaFayette, and others. Now form a group of those men who shaped the opinions of the masses previous to the Civil War,

men such as Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, Wendell Phillips, Robert Y. Hayne, John C. Calhoun, and Stephen A. Douglas. Form one composed of the men who took different sides on the questions that brought about the war between the states and who fought to uphold their views during the war, and instantly the names of Lincoln, Grant, Davis, and Lee present themselves to the mind. Thus it will be seen that while these groups help one to remember the part played by each individual, the time of his career, the side he espoused, etc., it is absolutely essential that the information regarding the actors and the events must be obtained before the groups can be formed. This is analogous to the necessity of getting hold of the idea, laying hold of the thought, before attempting to memorize matter, and by the same processes of the

brain will the mind lay hold of events in history as it grasps the ideas in a speech. The secret of remembering is that the thing must be known in all its phases before it is put away in the custody of the mind, where it is to repose until memory recalls it to activity; therefore, if we would remember the order of the succession of the presidents, the events leading up to the Revolutionary War, the poets, statesmen, or warriors of any period, we must learn the facts in connection with them. This once more brings us to the necessity of thoroughly seeing and understanding the soul, or the meaning, of a passage or a speech, the deeds of men, the productions of writers, the policies of statesmen, the formation and location of objects, before we can know them sufficiently well to remember them at will. It is useless to learn things by rote, to

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memorize parrot fashion, because too great an amount of labor is entailed in such a process of learning, and the knowledge so secured cannot long be retained. Memorize by facts, by thoroughly knowing events, men, or things; grasp the meaning of words; seek for the thought, the idea, the soul of the written or spoken matter; and after the facts are understood, the events, men, or things comprehended, the meaning of words perceived, and the thought grasped, they may be deposited in the chambers of the memory with the assurance that they will slumber there until they are needed, and that whenever they are summoned they will instantly report for duty.

LESSON VI

SEQUENCE

SQUENCE means a coming after, a following in order as regards space, time, or thought; as,

We come, as Americans, to mark a spot which must forever be dear to us and our posterity. We wish that, whosoever in all coming time, shall turn his eye hither, may behold that the place is not undistinguished where the first great battle of the Revolution was fought. We wish that this structure may proclaim the magnitude and importance of that event to every class and every age. We wish that infancy may learn the purpose of its erection from maternal lips, and that weary and withered age may behold it, and be solaced by the recollections which it suggests. We wish that labor may look up here, and be proud in the midst of its toil. We wish that, in those days of disaster, which,

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as they come upon all nations must be expected to come upon us also, desponding patriotism may turn its eye hitherward, and be assured that the foundations of our national power still stand strong. We wish that this column, rising toward heaven among the pointed spires of so many temples dedicated to God, may contribute also to produce, in all minds, a pious feeling of dependence and gratitude. We wish, finally, that the last object on the sight of him who leaves his native shore, and the first to gladden him who revisits it, may be something which may remind him of the liberty and the glory of his country. Let it rise, till it reach the sun in his coming; let the earliest light of the morning gild it, and parting day linger and play on its summit.*

— Daniel Webster.

Here we have a beautiful sequence of thoughts, one following the other in a natural and effective manner. Let us examine this extract from one of the

* From the Bunker Hill Monument Address, delivered June 17, 1825, at Charlestown, Mass.

master addresses of modern times and find out, thereby, how to memorize it.

We will first call attention to the arrangement: (1) We come, as Americans, to mark a spot which must forever be dear to us and our posterity. (2) We wish that whosoever, in all coming time, shall turn his eye hither, may behold that the place is not undistinguished where the first great battle of the Revolution was fought. (3) We wish that this structure may proclaim the magnitude and importance of that event to every class and every age. (4) We wish that infancy may learn the purpose of its erection from maternal lips, and that weary and withered age may behold it, and be solaced by the recollections which it suggests. (5) We wish that labor may look up here, and be proud in the midst of its toil. (6) We wish that in those days of disaster, which,

as they come upon all nations, must be expected to come upon us also, desponding patriotism may turn its eye hitherward, and be assured that the foundations of our national power still stand strong. (7) We wish that this column, rising toward heaven among the pointed spires of so many temples dedicated to God, may contribute also to produce, in all minds, a pious feeling of dependence and gratitude. (8) We wish, finally, that the last object on the sight of him who leaves his native shore, and the first to gladden his who revisits it, may be something which may remind him of the liberty and the glory of his country. (9) Let it rise, till it meet the sun in his coming; let the earliest light of the morning gild it, and parting day linger and play on its summit.

Now scrutinize it still closer by digging deeper to the thought: (1) As

Sequence

Americans, we come to mark a spot. (2) May all who behold that spot note that it is distinguished. (3) May the monument proclaim the importance of the event it commemorates. (4) May infancy learn from it the love of country. (5) May it speak to labor. (6) May it strengthen patriotism. (7) May it prove an inspiration to religion. (8) May it bid adieu to the departing citizen and welcome the comer home. (9) Let it rise forever.

Note the sequence of events and hopes: (1) Marking the spot. (2) The distinguishing of the spot. (3) Proclaiming the magnitude of the event it commemorates. (4) A lesson for infancy. (5) Encouragement to labor. (6) A stimulant for patriotism. (7) An aid to religion. (8) A symbol to the patriot. (9) May it be everlasting. Thus, by dismissing the

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words and arranging the thoughts in a sequence, the ideas are made plain to the understanding and the task of remembering made easy.

A sequence is a succession of events mentioned in the order of their occurrence; as,

I cannot sit tamely by, in humble, acquiescent silence, when reflections, which I know to be unjust, are cast on the faith and honor of Massachusetts. Had I suffered them to pass without admonition, I should have deemed that the disembodied spirits of her departed children, from their ashes mingled with the dust of every stricken field of the Revolution, from their bones mouldering to the consecrated earth of Bunker Hill,* of Saratoga,† of Monmouth,‡ would stand up in visible shape, before me, to cry shame on me, their recreant countryman.

— Caleb Cushing.

The three battles of the Revolutionary War, Bunker Hill, Saratoga,

* Battle of Bunker Hill, June 17, 1775.

† Battle of Saratoga, Oct. 7, 1777.

‡ Battle of Monmouth, June 28, 1778.

and Monmouth, are here mentioned in the order of their occurrence, and anyone versed in the history of the War for Independence would readily note this fact, and, having once noted it, would have no trouble in remembering the order in which they are used in the speech. It would be incorrect for a speaker to quote these battles except in the form of a sequence, a succession of events in the order of their occurrence, unless he desired to place them in the order of their importance, and then he would denote which he believed to be the most important by moving from the lesser to the greater. If he considered Saratoga to be the most important of the three engagements, he should say: From the fields of Monmouth, Bunker Hill, and Saratoga, etc. The Irish orator, Richard L. Sheil, in a speech delivered in the British House

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of Commons, devoted to showing that the English victories on many a field of battle were due to the valor of the Irish soldier, arranged his sequence in this manner: "The blood of England, Scotland, and of Ireland flowed in the same stream and drenched the same field," thus making Ireland the most prominent member of the series. Had an Englishman been speaking, and had he desired to emphasize the valor of his countrymen, he would have said: The blood of Ireland, Scotland, and England flowed in the same stream and drenched the same field. This rule of sequence applies to objects, events, or thoughts, and a careful study of it will help not only the memory but the writer and speaker as well.

In discussing the methods of orators, and you mention them by name, you should adopt some method in

doing so, either mentioning them in the order of their birth or in the order in which you esteem them; as,

Oratory, in all essential particulars, is the same today as it was in the times of Pericles, Demosthenes, and Cicero. True, the style of delivery as pertains both to voice and action, has been modified or affected by outside influences, but in its material qualities it has not changed. — Lawrence.

Here the orators are mentioned according to the era in which they flourished. If the author cited them in accordance with his estimation of their known qualities as orators, he would say: "Oratory flourished in the persons of Pericles, Cicero, and Demosthenes." Thus, you see, even in the arrangement of sequences, thought is the all-important element with which we have to deal, and unless we lay hold of the thought no outside aids will ever enable us to obtain good memories.

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The temptation of Christ, as told in the *Gospel According to St. Matthew*, Chapter IV, is a magnificent example of sequence:

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him

all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

The narrative starts with the statement that Jesus was led into the wilderness to be tempted; it then goes on to say that after fasting for forty days and forty nights he hungered, that the devil then suggested that he convert the stones into bread and satisfy his hunger. This he refuses to do. The devil then takes him up into the holy city, placing him upon the very pinnacle of the temple, and urges him to cast himself down in order to demonstrate that he is the Son of God. This also he refuses to do. Next the devil takes him to the

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top of a high mountain and promises to give him all that he beholds if he will adore him. This he rejects, turns upon the devil and orders him away. The devil departs, and angels come and minister unto Jesus.

Here is the sequence: (1) The going of Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted. (2) He hungered. (3) The arrival of the devil. (4) The first temptation. (5) The rejection. (6) The second temptation. (7) The rejection. (8) The third temptation. (9) The rejection. (10) The departure of the devil. (11) The coming of the angels.

Lay hold of the thought, get the facts in a sequence, and this entire narrative is easily learned and remembered.

CHAPTER VII

HOW TO REMEMBER A STORY

WHILE reading Charles Dickens' pathetic and touching story, *A Child's Dream of a Star*, look closely at the framework. You will then perceive that the story is arranged in the form of a play, being divided into scenes. The first scene tells of the two children; the second, of the death of the little girl and the entrance of her spirit into the star; the third, of the death of the newly born babe and his going to the star; the fourth, of the death of the mother and her reunion with her children in the star; the fifth, of the passing from earth into the star of the maiden daughter; the sixth, of the death of

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the once boy, now gray-haired old man, and of his spiritual meeting with his loved ones who had preceded him to the star. This is the bare outline of a simple story that is filled with thoughts, but if the reader will retain this outline in mind he will experience no difficulty in remembering the story. Arrange it in this manner: Framework—(1) A little boy and his sister. (2) The sister dies, and her brother dreams that she becomes an angel and makes her abode in a star they both had loved. (3) A baby brother is born to the little boy, it dies, and is received into the star. (4) The boy grows to be a young man, his mother dies and joins her children in the star. (5) The boy has become a middle-aged man, has married, is blessed with a daughter, she dies in early womanhood and is welcomed into the star. (6) The boy has

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reached the final stage of life; he is an old man, sinking into second childhood. He dies, and his spirit is carried on the rays of light that come from the star up to those whom he had loved on earth.

A CHILD'S DREAM OF A STAR

CHARLES DICKENS

Scene I. (a) There was once a child, (b) and he strolled about a good deal, (c) and thought of a number of things. (d) He had a sister, (e) who was a child too, (f) and his constant companion. (g) They wondered at the beauty of the flowers; (h) they wondered at the height and blueness of the sky; (i) they wondered at the depth of the bright water; (j) they wondered at the goodness and the power of God who made the lovely world.

(k) They used to say to one an-

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other, sometimes: Supposing all the children upon earth were to die, would the flowers, and the water, and the sky, be sorry? (l) They believed they would be sorry. (m) For, said they, the buds are the children of the flowers, and the little playful streams that gambol down the hillsides are the children of the water; and the smallest bright specks playing at hide and seek in the sky all night must surely be the children of the stars; (n) and they would all be grieved to see their playmates, the children of men, no more.

(o) There was one clear, shining star that used to come out in the sky before the rest, near the church spire, above the graves. (p) It was larger and more beautiful, they thought, than all the others, and every night they watched for it, standing hand in hand at the window. (q) Whoever

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saw it first cried out, "I see the star!" (r) and often they cried out both together, knowing so well when it would rise, and where. (s) So they grew to be such friends with it that, before lying down in their beds, they always looked out once again, to bid it good night; (t) and when they were turning round to sleep, they used to say, "God bless the star!"

Scene II. (a) But while she was still very young, oh very, very young, the sister drooped and came to be so very weak that she could no longer stand in the window at night; (b) and then the child looked sadly out by himself, and when he saw the star, turned round and said to the patient face on the bed, "I see the star!" (c) and then a smile would come upon the face, and a little weak voice used to say, "God bless my brother and the star!"

(d) And so the time came, all too soon, when the child looked out alone, and when there was no face on the bed; (e) and when there was a little grave among the graves, not there before; (f) and then the star made long rays down towards him, as he saw it through his tears.

(g) Now, these rays were so bright, and they seemed to make such a shining way from earth to heaven, that when the child went to his solitary bed he dreamed about the star; (h) and dreamed that, lying where he was, he saw a train of people taken up that sparkling road by angels. (i) And the star, opening, showed him a great world of light, where many more such angels waited to receive them.

(j) All these angels, who were waiting, turned their beaming eyes upon the people who were carried up

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into the star; (k) and some came out from the long rows in which they stood, and fell upon the people's necks, and kissed them tenderly, and went away with them down avenues of light, and were so happy in their company that, lying in his bed, he wept for joy.

(l) But there were many angels who did not go with them, and among them one he knew. The patient face that once had lain upon the bed was glorified and radiant, but his heart found out his sister among all the host.

(m) His sister's angel lingered near the entrance of the star, and said to the leader among those who had brought the people thither:

(n) "Is my brother come?"

(o) And he said, "No."

(p) She was turning hopefully away, when the child stretched out his

arms, and cried, "Oh, sister, I am here! Take me!" (q) and then she turned her beaming eyes upon him, and it was night; and the star was shining in the room, making long rays down towards him as he saw it through his tears.

(r) From that hour forth, the child looked out upon the star as on the home he was to go to, when his time should come; (s) and he thought that he did not belong to the earth alone, but to the star too, (t) because of his sister's angel gone before.

Scene III. (a) There was a baby born to be a brother to the child; (b) and while he was so little that he never yet had spoken a word, he stretched his tiny form out on his bed and died.

(c) Again the child dreamed of the open star, and of the company of angels, and the train of people, and

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the rows of angels with their beaming eyes all turned upon those people's faces.

(d) Said his sister's angel to the leader:

“Is my brother come?”

(e) And he said, “Not that one, but another.”

(f) As the child beheld his brother's angel in her arms, he cried, “O, sister, I am here! Take me!”

(g) And she turned and smiled upon him, and the star was shining.

Scene IV. (a) He grew to be a young man, and was busy at his books when an old servant came to him and said:

(b) “Thy mother is no more. I bring her blessing on her darling boy!”

(c) Again at night he saw the star, and all that former company. (d) Said his sister's angel to the leader:

“Is my brother come?”

(d) And he said, “Thy mother!”

(e) A mighty cry of joy went forth through all the star, because the mother was re-united to her two children. (f) And he stretched out his arms and cried, “O, mother, sister, and brother, I am here! Take me!”

(g) And they answered him, “Not yet,” and the star was shining.

Scene V. (a) He grew to be a man, whose hair was turning gray, and he was sitting in his chair by his fireside, heavy with grief, and with his face bedewed with tears, (b) when the star opened once again.

(c) Said his sister’s angel to the leader:

“Is my brother come?”

(d) And he said, “Nay, but his maiden daughter.”

(e) And the man who had been the child saw his daughter, newly lost

to him, a celestial creature among those three, (f) and he said, "My daughter's head is on my sister's bosom, and her arm is around my mother's neck, and at her feet is the baby of old time, (g) and I can bear the parting from her, (h) God be praised!"

And the star was shining.

Scene VI. (a) Thus the child came to be an old man, and his once smooth face was wrinkled, and his steps were slow and feeble, and his back was bent. (b) And one night as he lay upon his bed, (c) his children standing round, (d) he cried, as he had cried long ago:

"I see the star!"

(e) They whispered one another, "He is dying."

(f) And he said, "I am. (g) My age is falling from me like a garment, and I move towards the star as a

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child. (h) And O, my Father, now I thank thee that it has so often opened, to receive those dear ones who await me!"

(i) And the star was shining: and it shines upon his grave.

By searching for the framework (Attention), and arranging the thoughts in their proper order (Sequence), we are enabled to hold in mind all the incidents of this story and to narrate the details whenever we desire. It will thus be seen that we once more confront the fact that it is absolutely essential for us to lay hold of the thought, see the picture, and understand the problem before we are able to express, describe, or explain them.

LESSON VIII

HOW TO MEMORIZE A SPEECH

IN memorizing a speech, we rely on the same helps as those used in remembering a story, except that instead of dividing it into scenes we arrange it into its three divisions (opening, body, and conclusion), and besides these helps we call into use Apposition, Opposition, Combination, and Sequence.

The example here used is an extract from the great speech delivered by Daniel Webster in the celebrated White murder case, when he appeared as special counsel in behalf of the state.

The opening of the speech ends with "so many ounces of blood"; that of the body, with "the secret is

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his own and is safe” ; the conclusion, with the close of the speech.

These three grand divisions are subdivided as follows:

(1) Opening: (a) Why the advocate has undertaken to assist the prosecution. (b) Definition of the case.

(2) Body: (a) Description of the victim, (b) how the assassin entered the house, (c) how he reached his victim, (d) the location of the room and the victim. (e) The murder, (f) the retreat of the assassin, (g) his thoughts.

(3) Conclusion: (a) Exposing the delusion of the murderer, (b) description of his torture, (c) “murder will out.”

CRIME ITS OWN DETECTOR

DANIEL WEBSTER

(1) (a) Against the prisoner at the bar, as an individual, I cannot

have the slightest prejudice; I would not do him the smallest injury or injustice. (b) But I do not affect to be indifferent to the discovery and the punishment of this deep guilt. (c) I cheerfully share in the opprobrium, how much soever it may be, which is cast on those who feel and manifest an anxious concern that all who had a part in planning, or hand in executing, this deed of midnight assassination, may be brought to answer for their enormous crime at the bar of public justice.

(d) Gentlemen, this is a most extraordinary case. In some respects it has hardly a precedent anywhere—certainly none in our New England history. (e) This bloody drama exhibited no suddenly excited, ungovernable rage. The actors in it were not surprised by any lion-like temptation springing upon their virtue, and

overcoming it, before resistance could begin. Nor did they do the deed to glut savage vengeance, or satiate long-settled and deadly hate. (f) It was a cool, calculating, money-making murder. It was all "hire and salary, not revenge." It was the weighing of money against life, the counting out of so many pieces of silver against so many ounces of blood.

(2) (a) An aged man, without an enemy in the world, in his own house, and in his own bed, is made the victim of a butcherly murder, for mere pay. The deed was executed with a degree of self-possession and steadiness equal to the wickedness with which it was planned. Deep sleep had fallen on the destined victim, and on all beneath his roof. A healthful old man, to whom sleep was sweet, the first sound slumbers held him in their soft but strong embrace. (b) The assassin

enters through the window, already prepared, into an unoccupied apartment. (c) With noiseless foot he paces the lonely hall, half-lighted by the moon—he winds up the ascent of stairs, and reaches the door of the chamber. Of this he moves the lock, by soft and continued pressure, till it turns on its hinges without noise; and he enters, and beholds his victim before him. (d) The room was uncommonly open to the admission of light. The face of the innocent sleeper was turned from the murderer, and the beams of the moon, resting on the gray locks of his aged temple, showed him where to strike.

(e) The fatal blow is given! and the victim passes, without a struggle or a motion, from the repose of sleep to the repose of death. It is the assassin's purpose to make sure work; and he yet plies the dagger, though it was

obvious that life had been destroyed by the blow of the bludgeon. He even raises the aged arm, that he may not fail in his aim at the heart, and replaces it again over the wounds of the poniard! To finish the picture, he explores the wrist for the pulse! He feels for it, and ascertains that it beats no longer! It is accomplished! The deed is done. (f) He retreats, retraces his steps to the window, passes out through it as he came in, and escapes. (g) He has done the murder—no eye has seen him, no ear has heard him. The secret is his own, and is safe!

(3) (a) Ah! gentlemen, that was a dreadful mistake. Such a secret can be safe nowhere. The whole creation of God has neither nook nor corner, where the guilty can bestow it, and say that it is safe. Not to speak of that eye which glances through all

disguises, and beholds everything, as in the splendor of noon — such secrets of guilt are never safe from detection, even by man.

True it is, generally speaking, that “murder will out.” True it is, that Providence hath so ordained, and doth so govern things, that those who break the great law of heaven by shedding man’s blood, seldom succeed in avoiding discovery; especially in a case exciting so much attention as this, discovery must and will come, sooner or later. A thousand eyes turn at once to explore every man, every thing, every circumstance, connected with the time and place; a thousand ears catch every whisper; a thousand excited minds intently dwell on the scene; shedding all their light, and ready to kindle the slightest circumstance into a blaze of discovery.

Meantime, the guilty soul cannot keep its own secret.

(b) It is false itself; or rather, it feels an irresistible impulse of conscience to be true to itself: it labors under its guilty possession, and knows not what to do with it. The human heart was not made for the residence of such an inhabitant; it finds itself preyed on by a torment which it dares not acknowledge to God or man. A vulture is devouring it, and it asks no sympathy or assistance, either from heaven or earth.

The secret which the murderer possesses soon comes to possess him. And, like the evil spirits of which we read, it overcomes him, and leads him whithersoever it will. He feels it beating at his heart, rising to his throat, and demanding disclosure. He thinks the whole world sees it in his face, reads it in his eyes, and almost

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hears its workings in the very silence of his thoughts. (c) It has become his master. It betrays his discretion, it breaks down his courage, it conquers his prudence. When suspicions from without begin to embarrass him, and the net of circumstances to entangle him, the fatal secret struggles with still greater violence to break forth. It must be confessed, it will be confessed; there is no refuge from confession but suicide, and suicide is confession.

COMMENT

It should be noted that the speech divides nicely into three divisions, opening, body, and conclusion. The opening states why the advocate appears in the case, and what kind of a case it is. The body deals with a description of the murdered man, the manner in which the assassin gains

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access to the house, how he reaches his victim, the state of the room as the murderer enters it, and the condition in which he beholds the man whom he has determined to deprive of his life. It also describes the murder, explains how the murderer escapes from the scene of his crime, and tells what the criminal thinks regarding the probability of his being called upon to answer for his transgression. The conclusion shows how fallacious were the hopes of the assassin regarding his escape, describes his mental torture, and shows how murder, in the majority of cases, cannot be hidden from the eyes of man.

By means of sequence, all these facts may be impressed upon the mind, and being thus arranged in a natural and logical manner, they will flow from the mind consecutively and continuously whenever it is desired to

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repeat the speech. When memorizing a speech it is always advisable to reduce it to a mere skeleton, a framework, and impress the mind with the thoughts before attempting to learn the words which are to express them. We should bear in mind that the words are only symbols, that they stand for something other than themselves, and that this other, the thought, is what we should look for, and unless we grasp the thought, the words themselves will not remain long with us. Of course, we must study words so that we may see the thought, in order that we may know their meaning and significance, but we should never study words for the sake of remembering words. If we did so, the words would only cumber the memory to the exclusion of thoughts, and make of the mind a receptacle of useless material things

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instead of making it the abode of immortal spiritual creatures.

Once more the student is admonished to look for the soul of the discourse, the thing that gives it life, THE THOUGHT; to arrange all thoughts in a sequence, and not to bother about the words in which they are framed.

LESSON IX

PARAPHRASING AS AN AID TO MEMORY

PARAPHRASING is one of the best means of strengthening the memory and building up the mental faculties because of the necessity of thoroughly understanding a subject before it can be paraphrased. It is essential that the thought contained in words should be fully discovered and laid bare before it can be re-clothed in one's own language, and this entails on the paraphraser a lot of digging for the thought, a concentration of the thinking powers, and close attention to the matter to be paraphrased in order that all the essential points may be seen and reproduced. After the subject has been

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keenly analyzed, all the points or facts should be systematically arranged, all contrasts, appositions and series noted, and a complete framework constructed, and then it will be found that such a clear understanding will be possessed of the matter that is to be paraphrased that the words to convey the thoughts will flow freely. All that is necessary is to hold on to the idea, to keep the thought clearly before the mind, and the words to convey it will spontaneously appear. Paraphrasing makes a careful reader or observer, and, if you remember, stress has, in several of these lessons, been placed upon the prime necessity of paying attention to things in order that they may be impressed upon the mind; and in the second place, it trains the student to keep ever before him, while the mind is in operation, his object, thought, or

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theme, in order that he may reproduce from the chambers of memory all that he has stored there that pertains to the subject in hand. We will get down to practical work by paraphrasing some extracts from Ralph Waldo Emerson's oration, *The American Scholar*, delivered at Cambridge, Mass., August 31, 1837.

BOOKS

(1) The theory of books is noble. The scholar of the first age received into him the world around; brooded thereon; gave it the new arrangement of his own mind and uttered it again. It came into him, life; it went out from him, truth. It came to him, short-lived actions; it went out from him, immortal thoughts. It came to him, business; it went from him, poetry. It was dead fact; now, it is quick thought. It can stand and it can go. It now endures, it now flies, it now inspires. Precisely in proportion to the depth of mind from which it issued, so high does it soar, so long does it sing.

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The idea concerning the making of books is both romantic and grand. The first thinker looked out upon the world around him and beheld its many wonders. He saw the towering mountains, the deep vales, the broad plains; he heard the sighing of the winds, the rush of waters, and the peals of thunder; he beheld the majestic sun by day and the placid moon by night; the lightning, tearing its pathway through the firmament, thrilled his soul; the myriad of stars filled him with wonder; and Nature, with her many tongues, spoke to him her miraculous language. All these things he pondered upon; communed with them in silence; dreamed of them until they became a part of his being; set them in the order in which they most appealed to him and gave expression to them in his own way. He gazed upon the mountain, a vast

mound of rock and earth, and its material aspect passing from his mental vision he beheld its spiritual form and wondered at the forces that created it; the voice of the wind, the sigh of the tree, the song of the bird, the light of the stars, all spoke to him in plaintive tones and caused him to open his heart to their several voices; the green of the grass, the bright colors of the flowers, the gorgeous arch of the bow set upon the face of heaven caused him to ponder as to the origin of their beauties. All these things were evidences of life, it is true, but they were without the power of continued existence until they had become a part of man, entered his mind, and been transferred into thought. The mountain, the dale, the plain, the river, the stars, were all facts, but as soon as an understanding of them entered the soul

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of man they became spirits of eternity through being converted into thoughts. The strength of the thought, its ability to live, its power to affect, depended absolutely upon the depth, force, and continuity of observation which was bestowed upon the original objects before their spiritual aspects were noted by man.

(2) Or, I might say, it depends on how far the process had gone of transmuting life into truth. In proportion to the completeness of the distillation, so will the purity and imperishableness of the product be. But none is quite perfect. As no air pump can by any means make a perfect vacuum, so neither can any artist entirely exclude the conventional, the local, the perishable from his book, or write a book of pure thought, that shall be as efficient, in all respects, to a remote posterity, as to contemporaries, or rather to the second age. Each age, it is found, must write its own books; or rather, each generation for the next succeeding. The books of an older period will not fit this.

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In other words, the power of man to reproduce in the shape of thought what he beholds in the form of nature depends on the depth and power of his observation, on his ability to look into causes and find out what produces effects. The more he is able to do this, the greater his ability to reason, the more substantial and lasting will be his conclusions. Nothing in this life is absolutely correct; we are incapable of tracing a perfectly straight line or doing anything that might not be improved upon, consequently it is impossible for an author to produce a book that is free from error, or one that will last for all ages. Books, like all things pertaining to man, are best suited for the era in which they were written. It has been demonstrated that books of a past generation are no more suited to the people of the present period than are

the clothes of our ancestors becoming to us. They were all right in their time, but are now out of date, and are only useful as chroniclers of the past.

(3) Yet here arises a grave mischief. The sacredness which attaches to the act of creation — the act of thought — is transferred to the record. The poet chanting, was felt to be a divine man: henceforth the chant is divine also. The writer was a just and wise spirit: henceforward it is settled, the book is perfect; as love of the hero corrupts into worship of his statue. Instantly the book becomes noxious: the guide is a tyrant. The sluggish and perverted mind of the multitude, slow to open to the incursions of Reason, having once so opened, having once received this book, stands upon it and makes an outcry if it is disparaged. Colleges are built on it. Books are written on it by thinkers, not by Man Thinking; by men of talent, that is, who start wrong, who set out from accepted dogmas, not from their own sight of principles. Meek young men grow up in libraries, believ-

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ing it their duty to accept the views which Cicero, which Locke, which Bacon have given, forgetful that Cicero, Locke, and Bacon were only young men in libraries when they wrote these books.

Here we meet with a serious drawback, a blind worship of all that is ancient. Whenever a grand and noble thought is expressed in words, picture, or marble, we are apt to lose sight of the divinity of the utterance and look upon the poet, painter, or sculptor as being divine, and bow down to and worship the product, the created, instead of the thought, the creator. This is the grave mischief which arises from a blind clinging to the fact, a tying of ourselves to the productions of past ages instead of creating for ourselves. Whenever we look upon a book as being perfect, whenever we blindly cling to it and refuse to go further, that book is a menace to our

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mental liberty and becomes a hindrance instead of a help. Those who fasten themselves to such a book, see nothing of value anywhere but in that book, become bigots and surrender up their independence of thought. Colleges have been built upon books of which the thoughts contained therein were as dead as the men who gave utterance to them. Other books are written upon these books by book-readers and not by communers with Nature; and thus, instead of a voice speaking directly to us, we have nothing but echoes that repeat the thoughts of those who have spoken and passed away. In this manner many make a poor beginning through surrendering themselves to the doctrines or systems of others instead of laying hold of the everlasting principles of thought which live within the souls of men, the expressing of which denotes

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the individuality of the thinker. Men blindly accept the doctrines as expounded by Cicero, Locke, and Bacon, and lose sight of the fact that these very men whom they delight in quoting were at one time young men pouring over the productions of earlier ages. They were men, with the faults and weaknesses of men, and yet they are placed by many upon pedestals and worshiped almost as gods. Under such circumstances the productions of these men are injurious instead of beneficial.

(4) Hence, instead of Man Thinking, we have the bookworm. Hence, the book-learned class who value books, as such; not as related to nature and the human constitution, but as making a sort of Third Estate with the world and the soul. Hence, the restorers of readings, the emendators, the bibliomaniacs of all degrees.

Instead of an active soul, an original thinker, we have the eater of

books, the devourer of other men's productions, the man who loves books because they are books and not for the matter they contain. Such men set books between themselves and Nature, make a barrier of them, as it were, preventing their gazing out into the world and seeing the beauties and wonders thereof. From this same source come the men who delight to twist and turn the writings of famous authors, the men who come forward with new readings and interpretations, the men who can tell you the life and history of books, the date of their first issue, the names of the publishers, the styles of binding, etc., but who never have an original thought to utter. It were better books had not come down to us than to exist merely to fetter our minds and dwarf our souls by destroying our individuality.

N. B.—It will repay the student to read carefully the entire address, *The American Scholar*, and to paraphrase a portion of it from time to time until the address has thus been thoroughly studied.

LESSON X

HOW TO CONTROL THOUGHT

BEFORE considering how thought may be controlled let us fully understand what thought is. In the first place, it is, in the sense in which it is here used, the power of thinking. It is the exercise of the faculty that enables us to compare, to contrast one thing with another, such as differentiating between right and wrong; the power of arguing from premises and drawing conclusions from the argument.

In order to be able to think, we must have knowledge; in order that knowledge may be of use, we must be able to conceive and apply it; in order that it may be so conceived and

so applied, we must possess judgment—the power of reasoning. Thus we have come back to our first definition of the word thought, the power of thinking.

The thought faculty possesses three attributes or elements: (1) Conception, the ability to see with the mind; the faculty or mental power of conceiving so as to make known to the understanding; the ability to compare objects and arraign them for consideration. (2) Judgment, the ability to compare conceptions; power to choose between two or more things. (3) Reasoning, the capability of comparing judgments; ability to weigh one thing against another.

Thus it will be seen that we must have the powers of conception, judgment, and reason before we will be able to think; consequently, the more these elements of the thought faculty

are developed, the stronger will be the power of thought.

Conception may be strengthened by comparing objects, noticing the difference between horses, dogs, houses, streets, fields, and men. If one would have a good memory, one must not walk about aimlessly, he must observe things, and the only way in which one can learn to conceive is by paying attention. You must look in order that you may see, because if your eye rests upon an object and your thought does not go with the eye, the object is not seen. Idiots roam from place to place, their gaze wanders from object to object, but because they lack the power of conception, they also lack that of memory. Therefore, if you would learn to control your thoughts, you must first learn how to give birth to them, and this can only be done by exercising the

power of conception, the first element of the thought faculty.

The best way to develop conception is to note things as they appear to you, study them to see what they possess that has attracted your attention to them, compare their attributes or elements. In fact, give birth to a thought by bringing two objects or elements together. This is what is meant by the word conception.

Judgment means a comparison of the objects you have conceived, a weighing of thing against thing, of thought against thought. You cannot weigh one thing against another until you have at least two things, and you cannot possess two things unless they exist to you, consequently you must be able to conceive before you are capable of judging.

Reason is the mental faculty that enables us to discern the difference

between real and imaginary things, distinguish between right and wrong, good and bad, just and unjust. In its fullness, it means the mental nature of man. It is one of the great possessions of man that distinguish him from the brute; it is the rational nature of the human animal as contrasted with the intelligence of the brute.

In the second place, thinking is the ability to dwell upon objects or thoughts, to examine them closely, to hold on to them firmly, to brood over them until they are thoroughly perceived and understood. It is this second aspect of thinking that should be considered carefully by all who would improve the memory, because until the faculty of hovering over a thought, or dwelling upon a subject, is mastered, it will be impossible to acquire a good memory.

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This hovering over a thought should be practiced faithfully. When a name is heard for the first time, it should be repeatedly mentally, and wherever it can be done with propriety, it should be repeated orally. On being presented to a stranger, it is a good plan to repeat the name after the introducer, and then to take an instantaneous mental picture of the features of the person, at the same time associating the face and the name. During the conversation, make an opportunity to speak the name in addressing the party, and if these suggestions are followed, there should be no difficulty experienced in recalling both name and face. Look closely at matter that you read, gaze through the words upon the thought, weigh it, consider it carefully, lay hold of it and place it in the storehouse of memory, there to repose until you desire

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to call it forth. In reading a book, note the theme or story and put it orderly away in the keeping of memory. Be careful not to jumble it up; retain the order of the developing of the theme or the telling of the story, lay hold of the sequence, and it will then be easier to recall the details. In memorizing a speech, be particular to follow closely the order of its arrangement, the divisions of opening, body, and conclusion. Systematically arrange all that belongs in the opening and carefully consider the points the speaker produces or the facts he states. In the body of the speech judge his argument, censure or approve the picture he paints or the story he narrates. In the conclusion of the speech examine closely his deductions from the arguments on the points or the application of the picture or the story. By thus laying

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hold of the framework it will be a simple matter to retain the details and clothe the intellectual skeleton with words when it is desired to give utterance to the speech.

Thought should be conserved. Much thought energy is wasted through not being properly directed. By this it is meant that its forces are scattered, not focused with all their power upon the object or idea. As a tiny flame, focused upon a plate of steel by means of a blow-pipe, will cut through it as a knife cuts through a piece of cheese, so will thought, concentrated upon an object or a passage of literature, cut through what would make either obscure and lay all bare to the understanding. Mental control is what makes the masterful man or woman, and this mastery over the mind can be secured by practice. Do not permit your mind to wander, but

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send it in the direction you wish it to go, and hold it there until it has discerned the object, examined the face, or found the meaning. Compel it to obey, make it work, keep it active when on duty, but give it frequent periods of rest. The only way to build up the mental faculties is by using them, but care must be exercised to make this use judicious, because it is easier to tear down than it is to build up, and many memories are ruined through being abused or overworked; therefore, the mental powers should not be taxed beyond their strength; they should not be compelled to work until they are tired out, but should be rested frequently.

The mind should not be burdened with a mass of words. The brain can only hold a certain amount, and unless matters that are not to be used immediately are stowed away in the

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inner passages of the brain, there to repose until they are needed, there will be no room close at hand for things which the mind desires to lay hold of at short notice. The brain is like a chest of many drawers, which, if systematically packed, will hold much, and the contents may be readily found when wanted; but if thrown in indiscriminately, they will hold but little, and that little, being in confusion, will require considerable time for sorting before it can be of avail. System means much to the memory; therefore make use of Sequence whenever you desire to remember faces, figures, or thoughts. Arrange all things in proper order before putting them away in the charge of memory, and then as soon as you lay hold of one thing of the series, all the members will come forth in their proper order. It is impossible to overempha-

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size this matter of systematizing, noting and examining all things that one desires to remember, because only by this means can an object or a thought be clearly perceived, and as perception is the first requisite to memory, particular attention should be paid to it.

The necessity of getting to the root of things, of examining objects carefully, of *laying hold of the thought*, is again strongly emphasized, and this necessity must be complied with before one can have a good memory. A strong, keen, perceptive, and retentive memory may be had by any one who possesses intelligence, but such a memory, remember, can be obtained only by labor. Therefore, if you desire to improve your memory, work diligently along the lines here set forth for your guidance.

THE END

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